

intend to compile a chronicle, but rather to give us an in-depth view of the Jewish working-class movement, and in this he has brilliantly succeeded.

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THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION IN SWITZERLAND, 1914–1917. By *Alfred Erich Senn*. Madison, Milwaukee, London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1971. xvi, 250 pp. \$12.50.

This book is one of the most impressive monographs published in recent years on the immediate background to the Russian revolutions of 1917, and at the same time is one of the most frustrating. The main cause of frustration is the author's effort to squeeze into a mere two hundred pages of text an account of everything that went on in Switzerland between 1914 and 1917 among political exiles from the Russian Empire and among other groups that had some relevance to events in any part of the former Russian Empire between 1917 and 1921. As the author himself confesses, his book "contains several themes which cross at times but merge finally only at the time of revolution in Russia in 1917" (p. xv).

Professor Senn's principal theme is the "defensist-defeatist" or "nationalist-internationalist" schism in the ranks of the S.D. and S.R. Russian exiles—a theme whose importance to events in Russia in 1917 and 1918 can scarcely be doubted. However, this theme sometimes almost disappears as he turns to examine the Polish political exiles and their relations with the Germans, Lenin's relations with various secondary non-Russian figures of the Second International and with the German government, Miliukov's brief visit to Switzerland in 1916, and so forth. As a result of these digressions, some of Senn's more important conclusions could easily be missed by the casual reader. With respect to Lenin, he denies that the founding father of Bolshevism and the Soviet state was inspired by German bribes to oppose the war, adding that "the German intervention among the emigrés was largely restricted to contacting representatives of the minority nationalities" (p. xv). He concludes that it was rather the successful German offensive against Russia in the summer of 1915 that caused Lenin, at Zimmerwald and Kiental, to try to organize the socialist internationalists against the war. Only at this point, he believes, did Lenin first show signs of forsaking his parochial Russian outlook and emerge as a genuine leader of international Marxist socialism. On the other hand, Senn is convinced that Zimmerwald and Kiental represented only a passing phase in Lenin's career. He concludes that after coming to power in Russia "Lenin abandoned the idea of revolutionary war, which he had advocated in his theses of September 1915, and instead advocated preserving the gains of the revolution in Russia by making a separate peace with Imperial Germany. . . . the interest of the new Bolshevik government in its own survival prevailed" (p. 234).

One could not praise too highly the research in both published and unpublished sources on which this book is based. Moreover, Senn's approach to the great range of problems with which he deals is rigorously objective. The fact remains that he has succeeded in proving that in a work of this scope it is best not to clutter up the story of the Russian revolutions of 1917 with the related, but separate, stories of Germany's aims in the First World War and their impact on the Russian subject nationalities, and the international effort inspired by that war among non-Russians to use it as the takeoff point for a new system of international relations.

Senn has made a definite contribution to the study of his secondary themes, as well as to that of his main theme. One wishes nevertheless that the subject nationalities could have been dealt with in a separate volume.

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LA RÉVOLUTION INCONNUE, 1917–1921: DOCUMENTATION INÉDITE SUR LA RÉVOLUTION RUSSE. By *Voline*. Collection “Changer la Vie.” Paris: Éditions Pierre Belfond, 1969. 690 pp. 59 F., paper.

A by-product of the recent interest in anarchism, this book is a reprint, stimulated by the May 1968 rebellion in Paris, of a significant memoir-history-tract by a prominent Russian anarchist, Vsevolod Mikhailovich Eikhenbaum, better known under the pseudonym Voline. Published first in French in 1947, two years after the author's death, this account was translated into English, in two parts, published in London and New York in 1954 and 1955 under the titles *1917: The Russian Revolution Betrayed* and *The Unknown Revolution*.

It is useful to have available again a general interpretation of the Revolution from a distinctive anarchist point of view, but in several ways the book is disappointing. As an historical account it treats the Revolution in a superficial, often repetitious manner, albeit with a definite anarchist slant. For Voline the Bolsheviks are clearly the villains, who deceive the masses and become worshipers and wielders of state power, crushing in the process the nascent libertarian movement of 1917. As a memoir the book contains a number of vignettes and episodes from Voline's bitter experience in Russia during the period 1917–21, but most of the reminiscences are trivial rather than revealing, with the possible exception of anecdotes concerning a congress of workers and peasants sponsored by Makhno in October 1919, and sketches of various leaders of the Makhno movement.

Voline propounds the “true” story of the origin of the first soviet in 1905. He recalls it as a group formed in January–February 1905 to distribute to workers in St. Petersburg strike benefits collected by the lawyer Nosar. After the strike that followed Bloody Sunday had ended, the group continued to meet for several weeks as a council under Nosar's leadership, and it was easily reconstituted in October 1905. This explanation is quite similar to the one offered by Miliukov in his *Memoirs*, although the Kadet leader naturally credited the liberals with directing such workers' strike committees in the winter of 1905. Though workers' groups that were formed early in 1905—including those organized to elect delegates to the government-sponsored Shidlovsky Commission—undoubtedly contributed to the general experience and understandings from which grew the soviets of the summer and fall of 1905, Voline's ascription of the birth of the soviet to a specific group led by Nosar seems implausible, since Nosar himself, writing later about the events of 1905, made no such claim.

Over a third of Voline's study is devoted to the revolt at Kronstadt in 1921 and to the revolutionary movement in the Ukraine led by Makhno. Yet even here he contributes relatively little that is new. Much of his account of the Kronstadt rising is based on excerpts from the *Izvestiia* of the Provisional Revolutionary Committee (as earlier he has made liberal use of editorials and stories from *Golos truda*, an anarchist newspaper). Voline's treatment of the rise and fall of Makhno draws heavily on a detailed study by another anarchist, P. Arshinov. Voline presents a